

Questions and Answers on the 2016 USDA FAS Food Aid Programs Solicitation

Week of October 6, 2015

1) Page 19 states “Applicants should consider allocating, at a minimum, three percent of the project budget toward monitoring and evaluation. The minimum three percent is exclusive of the applicants M & E employee staff costs. For evaluation plans which include the conduct of impact evaluations, USDA expects the M & E costs to range between 5-10 percent of the project budget.” Since staff costs are typically the largest cost driver, what does USDA envision should be included beyond employee staff costs to meet the minimum three percent of the project budget toward M&E?

The 3–10 percent costs for M&E should include engaging an independent firm to conduct the baseline, midterm, and final evaluations. Examples of what this covers include:

- (1) Refinement and further development of the performance monitoring plan and evaluation plan,
- (2) Evaluation data collection,
- (3) Processing and analysis at baseline, midterm, and at the end of the project,
- (4) Translation costs of evaluation reports if necessary (e.g. from English to the local language),
- (5) Evaluation logistical support,
- (6) Hosting an evaluation stakeholder meeting,
- (7) In-country transportation and accommodation costs for staff and other stakeholders,
- (8) Evaluation and learning dissemination activities.
- (9) Development of monitoring guidelines (in multiple languages, as appropriate) for all project partners and
- (10) Development of a beneficiary monitoring database or system.

Costs associated with M&E personnel should be identified separately and must be included in Section 5 of the Budget Narrative “Additional Considerations & Cross-Cutting Expenses”.

2) Will USDA allow the implementer to establish a small sub-grants component to support the project objectives?

If the implementer is planning to give out subgrants to beneficiaries of the grant, this must be described and explained in the activity description section of the proposal. If the implementer plans to pass-through some of the funds to a sub-recipient organization that will be responsible for achieving some of the results of the agreement, this subgrant arrangement must be described in the section called other details.

3) Is a commodity list available with regard to the FY2016 Request for Applications?

This list of potential commodities is posted on the main page of FAIS below the 2016 solicitations.

<https://apps.fas.usda.gov/fais/public/files/Potential%20Available%20Commodities%20for%20FY16%20Food%20Aid%20Solicitation.pdf>